LABOUR MONTHLY

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NOTES OF THE MONTH
R. P. D.

THE DECISIVE PHASE
Quæstor

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Roy and Fania Pascal

THE TOCSIN OF EUROPE

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CONTENTS

September, 1943

	Page
Notes of the Month—*The Tocsin of Europe* by R.P.D.	257
The Decisive Phase by QUAESTOR	267
Italian Fascism on the Scrapheap by CLEMENS DUTT	271
The French Liberation Committee by FRANK PITCAIRN	276
The County of London Plan by TED BRAMLEY	278
For Educational Advance by G. C. T. GILES, B.A.	282
Hegel's Philosophy of Right by ROY and FANIA PASCAL	285

THE OPPORTUNITIES ARE THERE

"*Couldn't carry it any further just then . . .*" is a remark all of us have to make about those chance little talks on some political theme which have to be broken off too soon—and are so seldom resumed. Actually, why do we hope to round off in a fairly final way any discussion that has cropped up out of a chance talk? It's good such discussions begin. It would be better if they were resumed in a proper atmosphere for discussion, where all parties concerned are determined to sort out what lies between their views and try to reach common understanding. And why shouldn't they be?

Readers of LABOUR MONTHLY who participate in a Discussion Group find new people for their monthly discussion out of such interrupted, but promising, talks as we have mentioned. They "couldn't carry it any further just then," and accordingly asked the man or woman concerned to come along to the next meeting of the local Discussion Group.

Send for ORGANISED DISCUSSION (3d. post paid) which tells you all about the formation, function and conduct of political discussion groups to LABOUR MONTHLY, 134, Ballards Lane, London, N.3.

EXPORT BAN RAISED

As most of our regular readers are aware, the LABOUR MONTHLY has been banned from export for a period of over three years, during which repeated representations had proved of no avail. On August 10 we were informed that the Minister of Information had raised the ban. This enables overseas readers to receive their copies as before. Thanks are due to all readers who in one way or another have interested themselves in the removal of the ban.—LABOUR MONTHLY EDITORIAL BOARD.

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NOTES OF THE MONTH

Tocsin of Europe—Quebec Conference—Central Military Issue—Western Powers and Soviet Union—Military and Political Questions—Optimism Not Enough—New War Situation—Soviet Summer Offensive—Conquest of Sicily—Eastern Front and Europe—Italian Crisis—Fall of Mussolini—Towards the Liquidation of Fascism—Solidarity with Italian Anti-Fascism—Practical Tasks—Main Blows Against Nazism—Political Miscalculations—Lessons for the Future—The Crisis in Europe—Opposition in Germany—Nazi Germany and Free Germany—Conclusions for Action—Second Front—Political Strategy—Our Responsibility.

THE most important decisions of the war are now due to be taken. No time can be lost in rousing public opinion to the magnitude of the issues. In the six weeks since the opening of the Nazi summer offensive and the Allied attack on Sicily at the beginning of July the whole face of the war has changed. The rout of the Nazi summer offensive in three weeks, and the victorious advance of the Soviet offensive has been accompanied by the demonstration of Anglo-American superiority in the West, shown in the conquest of Sicily, the rising scale of air attacks and the defeat of the U-boats. The first crack in the structure of Fascism has been signalised by the fall of Mussolini. The crisis is extending to all the countries dominated by Fascism. It is clear to all that the moment for decisive action is here. Yet there is still hesitation and delay. *The tocsin of Europe is sounding for the supreme offensive for the final destruction of Fascism.* Can we fail to answer the call? This is the one issue which stands before all others for public opinion in Britain and the United States to-day.

WILL the Quebec Conference of the Prime Minister and President Roosevelt reach the necessary prompt decisions for full-scale action in the West? This is the one central question before the Quebec Conference. It is evident that the Quebec Conference has been called at short notice to meet the unexpected challenge of the new military situation and the crisis in Europe. It is an emergency conference, called within eleven weeks of the Washington Conference, which was confidently declared to have laid down the main lines of strategy for a whole period ahead, and which, it was explained, contemplated the postponement of such action in Europe as might be attempted until some unspecified future date "before the autumn leaves fall." The calling of the Quebec Conference is an expression of the bankruptcy of the old long-term gradual strategy, which has been outstripped by the speed of events. It is a recognition that all the existing plans need to be reviewed and revised in the light of the new conditions. But will the necessary conclusions be drawn? Will the necessary decisions for action be taken without delay? There are too many serious signs that such an outcome of the Quebec Conference can by no means be taken for granted. Hence the urgency of the mobilisation of democratic anti-Fascist opinion in Britain and in the United States in order to ensure that the necessary decisions are taken.

WIDESPREAD press comment has seized on the question of the absence of a Soviet representative at the Quebec Conference. Public concern has been aroused at the explicit announcement that no Soviet representative has been invited to participate in the Quebec Conference. This public concern is the expression of the anxiety which is felt at the absence, in the third year of alliance, of a co-ordinated United Nations strategy; the signs of divergence, not only on military issues, but on political issues; and the tendencies in some quarters to present the Anglo-American partnership as separate

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from the common alliance. These questions are important and will need to be resolved. But the key to their solution lies in the field of military action, in the decisions for military action which need to be taken now by the British and American Governments.

IT cannot fail to escape attention that it is precisely the leading press organs of United States Republican opinion which have been most insistent on the importance of Soviet representation at the Quebec Conference. This insistence, however correct in principle in stressing the importance of co-ordination of policy of the three Powers, takes on a different significance when the main stress is laid on the necessity of the prior settlement of a host of political issues and questions of the ultimate settlement of post-war Europe as a preliminary to tackling the urgent present military questions. This is to place the cart before the horse. Thus the *New York Times*, while correctly stressing the importance of a firm and realist understanding between the Western Powers and the Soviet Union as "the great imperative of Allied strategy," proceeds to enumerate the "three major points of disagreement" as (1) the Second Front; (2) the "*cordon sanitaire*" or future of the Baltic peoples and Poland; and (3) the future of Germany; and then proceeds to draw the conclusion that the military question must be regarded as only the reflection of the political questions, which must be settled first: "the failure thus far to achieve complete military agreement merely reflects disagreement or misunderstanding in the larger field of politics."

ON the contrary, it would be more true to say that the present political questions or divergences on various important concrete issues, on which settlement is necessary, reflect at this moment or are accentuated by the absence of full unified military action, which is the essential first foundation for confidence. The first step to solution lies in the field of action. The necessities of unified action are the basis of the understanding of the necessity of unity in every sphere of policy and strategy. Absence of maximum combined military action could imperil the alliance; and prolonged diplomatic interchanges would be no cure for this. The common military action of the alliance must come first, without waiting for prolonged political conferences, not only for the plain practical reason that the present urgent situation of opportunity admits of no delay, but also because this is the first elementary foundation for mutual confidence in order to solve the other questions. In the near future a wider Three Power Conference will be essential. But in relation to the responsibilities of the Quebec Anglo-American Conference, it is not the absence of a Soviet delegate at Quebec that should be the main concern of public opinion. It is the absence of the Second Front in the West.

FOR this reason it is essential to arouse public opinion to the urgency of the present military situation as the decisive question now for the whole future, and to the plain practical conclusions for our action to which it points. The speed and magnitude of the events which have developed in the recent period—the successes in Sicily, the Soviet advance, the fall of Mussolini, the check to the U-boats, the intensified air raids, the rising anti-Fascist struggle in Europe—have given rise to widespread and justified elation, confidence and optimism in the future of the war and the visible approach of the downfall of Fascism. But this confidence and optimism has not yet been guided into practical channels to respond to the challenge and opportunity of these events with swift and corresponding action from our side for speedy victory.

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THE main trend of leading opinion and press comment has either been to encourage short-sighted passive optimism, expectations that "it will all be over in a few months now," speculations whether the fall of Hitler will not shortly follow that of Mussolini, whether the new intensified air raids alone will not do the trick, whether internal revolt will not do it, whether "1918" is not already here, what will follow the downfall of Fascism, where Hitler and Mussolini will try to escape, etc.; or alternatively, as a corrective to such light-hearted optimism, to issue grim and gloomy warnings of long protracted war on the lines of the old time-tables. Between these two extremes the plain, practical significance of the present war situation for our action is lost to sight. At the very moment when the most powerful and united call and leadership for the action of the people is indispensable, there prevails the utmost confusion of semi-official expression. Yet the issues were never so clear and urgent.

WHAT is the essence of the new war situation which has developed since the beginning of July? It is characterised by three main factors. The first main factor, which is the heart of the new war situation and its principal driving force, is the crushing defeat of the Nazi summer offensive and the advance of the Soviet offensive in the most gigantic and intensive battles of the war. The second is the now incontestable superiority of the United Nations by land, sea and air, alike in trained forces, equipment and the rate of war production, shown in the successful invasion of Sicily, the intensified air raids, and the countering of the submarine menace, and revealing that the entire fortress of Europe is now open to assault. The third, consequent on the first two, is the gathering crisis within the camp of Fascism, breaking out first on a major scale in the weakest link, Italy, with an initial change of regime and rising mass revolt; developing at varying stages in all the satellite countries, and with intensification of the liberation struggle in the occupied countries; and affecting also the situation within Germany, and creating for the first time the basis for a wide opposition movement inside Germany. These are the three key factors which carry the plainest practical conclusions for our military and political strategy.

THE defeat of the Nazi summer offensive and the advance of the Soviet offensive is undoubtedly the main driving force of the present new war situation. The magnitude and significance of these battles, as the next great turning point of the war since Stalingrad, has been partially obscured from view by the current press treatment in this country, which—with not unnatural primary concern with the battles of our own fighting men—has during these fateful weeks given pride of place to the battles in Sicily and the intensified air raids, with the Soviet offensive as an accompaniment. Such a treatment has inevitably encouraged the public impression that three parallel fronts are at this moment battering the Axis, in place of the sharp realisation that there is still no major Anglo-American front against Nazism to parallel the Soviet offensive, and that the absence of such a Second Front is the crucial reason why, despite the unparalleled favourable factors, the final defeat of Hitler cannot yet be treated as a certainty this year.

THERE is no question of underrating the significance of the conquest of Sicily. The invasion and conquest of Sicily is not only of direct and obvious strategic significance for the whole situation in the Mediterranean and the attack on Italy and Southern Europe. It has also exploded the myth of the impregnability of the fortress of Europe. It has accelerated the crisis in Italy. It has strengthened all the conditions for the estab-

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lishment of the Second Front. But it has not diminished the urgency of the establishment of the Second Front. When some of the more fatuous spokesmen of delay have endeavoured to present Sicily as a "Second Front," it is necessary to maintain a sense of proportion. The Anglo-American forces in Sicily engaged the stubborn resistance of some two to three Nazi divisions and the very weak resistance of some few Italian divisions. On the Eastern Front the Red Army is engaging two hundred Nazi divisions and thirty satellite divisions. Thus in the decisive measure of Nazi divisions, which represent the essential fighting force to be broken for the defeat of Hitler, Sicily represented less than two per cent. of the Eastern Front—an obviously inadequate share for the colossal combined strength of the British Empire and the United States, even after every allowance is made for every other form of action, no less than of production and supplies, in the united effort of the total world conflict. The urgency of the Second Front in the West stands out the more sharply, the more clearly the true contours and proportions of the war as a whole are seen.

THE significance of the Soviet offensive must thus be seen in relation to the war as a whole. Year after year since 1936 has seen the Nazi summer offensive overrunning and enslaving new countries or engulfing new territories. With 1943 the change has come. The Nazi summer offensive, which was opened on the Kursk sector on July 5, 1943, was launched with the heaviest mechanised weight yet gathered together in a single assault, leaving the attack on Poland or France a picnic by comparison, and exceeding by four times the mechanised weight of the battles of Stalingrad. Yet within three weeks that offensive was broken, and with that defeat a paralysing spell—the spell of the inevitable victories of the Nazi summer offensive—was lifted from the face of Europe.

FOR the first time the anti-Nazi summer offensive, the offensive of the Red Army, has swept forward in Europe. The offensive which began with the conquest of Orel and of Bielgorod, accompanied by the salvoes of the guns of victory sounded for the first time in Moscow, has pressed forward against the fierce German resistance beyond Kharkov, towards Briansk and towards Smolensk in a gigantic series of battles. The war correspondents have related how in the Battle of Orel the concentration of artillery was ten times the scale of the Battle of Verdun, the heaviest battle of the first world war. These are the battles whose reverberations are echoing through Europe and sounding the tocsin of liberation for all the peoples enslaved in the prison-house of Nazism. These are the battles which are sounding the clarion call for our action now to make possible and speed the final victory.

IT is against this military background that the new political developments in Europe need to be seen. The direct connection of the crisis in Italy, not only with the Sicilian assault, but with the defeat of the Nazi offensive, is evident from the facts. From the first day of Italy's entry into the war, not only in the jackal's attack on France, but in the ignominious campaign in Greece and the Balkans, in the African campaigns, in the fighting in Sicily, and in the internal situation in Italy, it is Nazism that has had to be more and more the prop of the weak and crumbling structure of Italian Fascism. By the third week of July the defeat of the Nazi summer offensive was manifest. On July 19 took place the meeting of Hitler and Mussolini at Verona, of which the bareness of the communique brought the hint of impending disaster. There could be no more Nazi reinforcements for the defence of Italy; all were needed for the Eastern Front. The reports may be correct that at

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that meeting the Nazi plan for the abandonment of Southern and Central Italy was handed out to Mussolini as his instructions to bring back to the Fascist Grand Council.

ON July 23 the Nazi summer offensive was finally liquidated as proclaimed in Stalin's Order of the Day on July 24. On July 24 took place the meeting of the Fascist Grand Council, and the fall of Mussolini on July 25. To the rising tide of anti-Fascist mass revolt, which had been developing with large-scale actions of the workers since the spring, was added the overwhelming volume of national feeling, on which Italian Fascism had formerly endeavoured to build. The decomposition reached to within the Fascist camp, as shown in the division between the Ciano-Grandi group and the Mussolini-Scorza group. Mussolini was revealed, no longer as the leader of Italian chauvinist expansion, but as the liquidator of the Italian Empire and the impotent puppet of a foreign domination which could no longer protect its vassal.

THE fall of Mussolini, the "only inventor" of Fascism, and its authorised exponent to a credulous public of degenerates, reactionaries and muddleheads in all countries, until the rival Nazi firm took over the leadership, is a landmark in the decline and fall of Fascism. It is not yet the end of Fascism even in Italy, still less in Europe, where the heart and centre of Fascism since 1933 is Nazi Germany. But it is a public confession of the bankruptcy of Fascism in the country of its origin. It is a powerful blow to the mythology of Fascism, the mystic balderdash of the "new order of society," the "elimination of class conflict," the "third alternative to capitalism or socialism," the "civilisation of the twentieth century," whose fantastic propaganda succeeded for a while in deluding, not only the wilful dupes of the rich reactionaries in all countries, but also many painstaking liberals and social reformers who sought with broad-minded tolerance to study and discuss the "philosophy" of the gangsters. Once again the correctness of the Marxist analysis is vindicated.

THE method of the transition is not least significant. In face of the complete bankruptcy of the regime, alike in external and internal policy, and in face of the rising mass revolt, the same big monopolists, bankers and generals who placed Fascism in power, throw off its trappings with a wave of the hand as easily as they threw off the trappings of parliamentarism, when it suited their purpose. They proclaim the Fascist Party dissolved; they execrate its memory and expunge its symbols, and pass on to the next regime of military dictatorship, as easily as an old rake passes on to a new love affair. The inspired dictator, the "one man," the terrible all-powerful tyrant, to whom the entire population was taught from babyhood to swear obedience as the supreme moral law, and who was supposed to rule with a rod of iron equally the trembling monopolists and the workers from the mysterious heights of an imaginary classless tyranny, ignominiously disappears from view at the word of command like a dismissed butler. The Italian people, after twenty-one years of Fascist indoctrination, storm the Fascist offices and chase the Fascist bullies, who vanish through the back doors of their mansions into the protective custody of their masters under the military dictatorship—until such time as the Italian people will smoke out the lot. After twenty-one years of Fascism all the familiar social and political issues are resumed.

THE crisis in Italy is still only in its first stages. The Italian people have still to finish Fascism. They have still to deal with its heir and receiver in bankruptcy, the Badoglio regime. It was Badoglio, it is worth remembering, who,

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as Chief of Staff, in 1921 gave the order to the army officers to support the Fascisti. The Badoglio regime represents the dictatorship of the same reactionary monopolists and militarists who placed Fascism in power, and who seek now to salvage the essence of its oppression, while sacrificing the unpopular trappings. Its spirit of continuity was admirably expressed in the unanimous declaration of the Badoglio Cabinet on August 5 that:—

> The State will maintain all its engagements towards citizens of every social class, and particularly the moneyed class.

The Fascist Party is formally dissolved; its emblems are destroyed; but Fascists remain in all the governmental positions, in charge of national and local administration, and at the head of the undissolved Fascist mass organisations. Above all—as the inevitable consequence and final demonstration of continuity—the Badoglio regime remains tied to the Axis; for, being without popular support, it must look to such foreign military support as it can still obtain. Thus the mighty national front of the Italian people for peace and freedom moves no less inevitably into conflict against the Badoglio regime in order to bring Italy out of the war and end the Axis Fascist domination, as the decisive step towards ending Fascism in Italy.

HOW can we best help Italian Anti-Fascism? This is the first question which must spring to the mind and heart of every fighter against Fascism in face of the glorious events in Italy. This is not only a question of vital political importance, for the aims of the battle of the peoples against Fascism, to speed by every means in our power the victory of the democratic front against Fascism in Italy, which is already the prototype and inspiration for the peoples struggling against Fascism all over Europe, and especially in the countries of the Hitlerite *bloc*. It is also and above all a military question to be seen in relation to the war situation as a whole.

THE crisis in Italy represents an unparalleled opportunity for the United Nations in the war against the Axis, against the domination of Hitler. A new ally has sprung up by our side, and is advancing in battle. No longer the handful of anti-Fascist underground fighters meeting martyrdom to arouse and organise the masses of the people. No longer the handful of anti-Fascist *emigrés* abroad denouncing the regime from distant lands, but with small direct influence on the affairs of their country. Now the millions of the Italian people are in movement for freedom and against the Axis. This is the great new opportunity which is presented to the leaders of the United Nations by the crisis in Italy, and which combines with the major opportunity presented by the Soviet offensive.

CAN it be said that the military and political response of the United Nations has risen to the heights of this opportunity? Can it be said that we have given the best practical help to Italian Anti-Fascism, to the Italian people in their battle against Badoglio and the Axis? Is our best help to offer them the benevolent dictatorship of Morgan's broker, the intimate friend and associate of the biggest Italian industrialists who maintained Fascism in power—to exchange the Fasces for a Rodd? Is our best help to congratulate the House of Savoy and prohibit criticism of Badoglio? Is our best help to pulverise the headquarters of the workers' anti-Fascist movement in Northern Italy, while engaging in complicated diplomatic discussions on the possibility of leaving the seat of Badoglio's administration immune? War is war; and every military measure necessary has to be taken to strike at the Badoglio regime and the domination of the Axis in Italy, and to utilise Italy as a base to strike at Hitler, however much the blows may fall at this juncture on our friends and allies, the Italian people. But the sum-total of the

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policy pursued in the first weeks of the crisis in Italy can only be regarded as the loss of an opportunity, comparable to and, in fact, closely associated with the loss of the opportunity presented by the Soviet offensive.

WHAT is the positive help which it lies in our power to give to Italian Anti-Fascism, not only in the interests of the victory of the Italian people over Fascism, but equally in the interests of the victory of the United Nations over Hitler? The essentials are clear. First, political help by ending the present vacillations and firmly recognising Italian Anti-Fascism, the National Front of the five parties representing all sections of political opinion in Italy outside Fascism, as our ally in the struggle against Hitlerite domination in Italy and its governmental agents. Second, practical help to the Italian National Front by the supply of arms, ammunition and technical assistance. Third, and most important, military help, not only by our action against the Badoglio Government, but, above all, by our action against Nazism in Europe.

THE main basis of support and strength of the Badoglio regime, apart from the weak and corrupt *bourgeois* and former Fascist elements, lies in the Nazi armed forces sustaining it, not only the relatively smaller forces already within Italy, but the threat of the invasion (which the latest reports indicate has in fact begun) of additional Nazi divisions marching into Northern Italy to suppress the principal anti-Fascist forces in the North. Here is the principal immediate menace to the Italian democratic revolution. This menace we can decisively counter by the strength of our action against Nazi Germany in Western Europe, thereby tying up Hitler's forces and preventing his intervention in Italy, and even compelling withdrawal of the existing forces from Italy. Thus the principal military conclusion to be drawn from the Italian crisis, to deliver the main blow against Nazi Germany and launch now the heaviest offensive against Hitler in the West, coincides with the conclusion to be drawn from the Soviet offensive. The Second Front in the West is the best help to Italian anti-Fascism.

MR. CHURCHILL'S speech on July 27, immediately following the fall of Mussolini, was of positive value in that it stressed the necessity of delivering the main blow against Nazi Germany, reminding its hearers that Italy as a war unit (against which the Anglo-American forces have so far been principally engaged in action) represented only one-tenth of the strength of Hitler Germany, and stressed the necessity of "hotting up" military action. But its negative character lay in its attitude to the Italian anti-Fascist revolution. Here, in place of a buoyant positive response and firm affirmation of support to the Italian anti-Fascist forces, the references were pessimistic and negative, shot through with fear and anxiety over the prospect of "chaos and anarchy" in Italy, and with alarm lest the Allied forces should find themselves compelled to "tread a path which might lead to execution squads and concentration camps," i.e., to suppress the Italian democratic revolution. Hence followed the melancholy advice of passivity, to "let them stew in their own juice," in place of taking sides with Italian anti-Fascism and utilising the gigantic opportunity opened. Similarly, the abstract principle of recognising the necessity of delivering the main blow against Nazi Germany was not translated into the positive conclusion of the recognition of the urgency of the Second Front.

THE policy of passivity was carried out in General Eisenhower's six-day truce, which enabled the Badoglio regime to surmount the critical first days when the full tide of mass revolt was sweeping through Italy and destroying

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the main citadels of Fascist rule, and to consolidate in a certain measure its authority with the aid of martial law. It is evident that the official policy looked hopefully to the regime of Badoglio and King Victor Emanuel as a "moderate" regime, steering between Fascism and the democratic forces, which would lead Italy out of the war and carry through the surrender to the Allies. There was no appreciation of the harsh realities of the situation in Italy, that a regime which was still tied to the navel-strings of its Fascist origins, which was seeking to salvage the remains of Fascism, while sacrificing the outer trappings, and which directed all its efforts to maintain the essence of the old reactionary domination in opposition to the strivings of the democratic anti-Fascist masses, was thereby necessarily also tied to the Axis in foreign policy, and that only the action of the democratic anti-Fascist masses, in conjunction with the military action of the Allies, could free Italy from the war, whether by forcing the Badoglio Government to make peace or by overthrowing it. Disillusionment followed, as the link-up of Badoglio and the Axis became more strongly affirmed; and a partial correction of policy ensued, with the sharper tone towards Badoglio and the resumption of military action. But the correction is still only partial, both in respect of the political attitude to Italian anti-Fascism, and, above all, in respect of the main military conclusion still to be drawn, for the urgency of speeding up the offensive against Nazi Germany in the West.

THE lessons of this Italian experience are the more important, because the crisis which has broken out at full blast in Italy is developing at varying stages and in varying forms with extreme speed throughout Europe. In France the numbers of those who have resisted the call-up for slave labour in Germany and who have joined the partisan bands is stated to have reached eighty thousand; the tenth member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party has now been executed; the population statistics show that under Nazi rule deaths have exceeded births by half a million. "Every day that passes without a Second Front increases ruin and catastrophe in France," declares the Algiers Radio; "the prolongation of the war is the murder of our country." In Norway and the Balkans the struggle rises. In all the satellite countries there is extreme instability. The neutrals, Sweden and Spain, begin to veer with the change of the war situation; Sweden ends the transit of Nazi troops; Franco propaganda begins to play up to the British Empire with fulsome flattery as its hope of salvation after the loss of its former protector, Mussolini.

WITHIN Germany the effects of the new war situation also make themselves felt. Alongside the strain of the extreme war mobilisation, the crippling losses on the East, the failure of the summer offensive, the collapse of Italy and the increasingly heavy air raids, the official propaganda can only hold out the hopes of a prolonged defensive strategy, through delay of decisive action from the West, with consequent speculation on a political solution through division of the Allies. Typical was the recent broadcast of General Dittmar, which stated:—

> If we succeed in protracting matters without offering the enemy opportunities of dealing decisive blows to deprive us of our conquests, we shall have done our best to prepare the way for a fundamental turning point.

The line of thought here is obvious. Delaying action, the postponement of the Second Front, is seen as the one hope which can lead to prolongation of the war and thus open the way to the possibility of a "fundamental turning point," that is, a political change. If this is the interest of Nazi strategy, it is equally obvious that the interest of the United Nations is the opposite, in order to defeat this last hope of Nazi policy.

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UNDOUBTEDLY caution needs to be exercised with regard to all exaggerated or wishful reports of the sharpening of the internal situation in Germany, the first signs of disintegration in Nazi leading ranks, or accentuation of division between the military command and the Nazi leaders. The possibilities of crisis or sharp political changes are increasing with the new situation. But the Nazi regime is still powerful; its army represents a colossal and still unbroken war machine; its resources and war production are enormous; despite retreats, its armed forces are still contesting every inch of ground with ferocious tenacity. The military defeat of Nazi Germany remains the primary and indispensable task. But alongside, and auxiliary to, this military task the political aspect now takes on increased importance. For what is clear is that the conditions have ripened for the development of a wide internal opposition movement in Germany.

THIS is the significance of the foundation of the Free Germany National Committee among the German prisoners of war and anti-Fascist exiles in the Soviet Union. The conditions were not ripe in 1941. They were not ripe in 1942. They are ripe in 1943. The changed psychology among the prisoners of war illustrates this. It is natural that this Committee should be founded in the Soviet Union, where are the overwhelming majority of German prisoners. Critics in the West, who fail to understand the significance of this development as a powerful additional weapon for the defeat of Hitler, would do better to turn their attention to the urgent necessity of a corresponding policy on the side of Britain and the United States. If the question is asked, what is the official policy of the British and American Governments in relation to German anti-Fascism, the answer still remains at present a vacuum. There are plenty of private unofficial policies, often mischievous in the extreme, from Vansittartism to Appeasement. But it is vitally important that there should be a co-ordinated and unified policy of the United Nations in relation to the encouragement and stimulation of a mass opposition movement in Germany against Hitler and for peace and freedom.

THE conclusions to which this entire situation points for the military and political strategy of the United Nations are inescapable. The central main conclusion, to which every feature of the situation equally points, is the urgent necessity of the full-scale military action of Britain and the United States against Nazi Germany in the West, that is, of the Second Front, not at some distant future date, not after a prolonged series of partial sideshow actions, but now at the same time as the present Soviet offensive and in the midst of the gathering crisis in Europe.

ALL the old controversies and arguments against the Second Front are now abandoned, and no publicist dares any longer to bring them forward. All the old technical grounds which were brought forward as justifications for opposition or delay have been exploded. It is not only that the overwhelming superiority of trained armed forces available, and of armaments and war production, is now indisputable. Mr. Lyttelton, in his recent statement, declared that United Nations war production is now three times the level of the Axis. Indeed, there are some signs of a crisis of "over production" of armaments—at the moment of the most intense phase of the war.

EVEN the last ground of opposition, which was long stoutly held as the final stronghold to justify delay, the question of shipping, has now lost its validity. On August 12 the *Financial News* came out on its front page, under the heading "Allies Have Now a Temporary

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Shipping Surplus," with the following statement of the position:—

For the first time since the war began, the Allied nations have a surplus of shipping capacity. . . .

It is, of course, as yet too early to discern how the improvement will affect civilian export or import shipments. . . .

Military requirements will obviously have to come first in the list of priorities, but if the temporary surplus of tonnage should continue, it seems reasonable to look for some relaxation of restriction of civilian imports.

The City traders dare to speculate on the use of this surplus of shipping to increase civilian imports. Lord Woolton offers optimistic pictures of improved food prospects. Mr. Hudson reverses the previous call for increasing the plough-up. It is for the nation to see that this surplus of shipping shall be used, not for raising further the already relatively higher consumption standards in this country, while the martyred populations of Europe starve, while the rations of the Red Army are cut, but that this surplus of shipping shall be used to speed military victory, that is, for the Second Front.

ALONGSIDE this, and integrally bound up with the military strategy of the Second Front, must go a firm political strategy of full support to the struggle of the European peoples against Fascism. An end must be made of the paralysis of effective action of the United Nations for the defeat of Hitler, because of inadmissible political calculations and prejudices, hesitations and vacillations, which look with jaundiced hostility on the rising tide of popular liberation struggles in Europe in place of seeing in them our most powerful ally for speedy victory. These political calculations are a hangover of the old Munichite policies; they are the principal foundation on which Hitler and Nazi propaganda seek to build in order to prevent Allied victory. Political strategy must be the accompaniment and auxiliary of military strategy for the speediest defeat of Fascism, in place of sabotaging it. The immediate full recognition of the French National Committee as the provisional political and military authority on behalf of the French people; a co-ordinated policy of the United Nations in support of Anti-Fascism in Germany, Italy and all Axis countries; removal of the bar to the signing of the Czech-Soviet Treaty; strengthening of the anti-Fascist character of the refugee Allied Governments; and a policy of democratic negotiation and settlement with the leaders of Indian Nationalism: these are vital parts of a consistent strategy for speediest victory over Fascism.

IN the flush of the initial successes which have been won, and of the many favourable factors which characterise the present situation of opportunity, we cannot afford for one moment to lose from sight the parallel tide of the reactionary offensive which accompanies the advance of the struggle of the peoples for liberation. The reactionary forces, precisely in proportion as they believe the immediate danger of the war to be past, as they consider with alarm the consequences of the downfall of Fascism, and make their calculations in terms of the post-war situation, inevitably increase their activity at the present moment. Signs of this reactionary offensive at home can be discerned in the provocative attitude of certain sections of the employers; in the stiffened resistance to any concession on the Trades Disputes Act; in the agitation against the registration of women of forty-five to fifty for war service; in the increasingly successful pressure for release of the most prominent Mosley Fascists and even for the release of Mosley. These same retrograde forces work for the delay of the Second Front, injure relations with the Soviet Union, and might even, if a turn in the situation arose, come out openly for some form of appeasement.

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FOR this reason it is the more important that all the democratic anti-Fascist forces of the nation, of the labour movement in the first place, and of the overwhelming majority of the people, should come out actively for those policies which are essential for speedy victory, and for ensuring that that victory shall represent a victory for democratic anti-Fascist liberation. The kernel of all present issues is the immediate opening of the Second Front. It is not enough to see the favourable opportunities of the present situation. It is necessary also to see no less sharply the dangers if we should fail to act in time.

A GREAT responsibility rests at this moment of history on the peoples of Britain and the United States. On all sides we can see advance. The Red Army and Soviet people are fighting at a tempo and with an all-out effort exceeding even all that has gone before. The Italian people are storming Fascism, and wide sections of the peoples are advancing in the struggle against Fascism all over Europe, under conditions of incomparably greater difficulty than any the popular movement in this country has to face. The British and American soldiers in Sicily, the airmen and the seamen, are all doing their part on the highest level. But the key to the success of all is the speedy establishment of the Second Front in Western Europe; and the pressure to speed this can only come from the strength of the political campaign in this country and the United States. Here is where the weakness lies; it is here that we must make a change. It is essential to get rid of all easy-going idle passive optimism, of the attitude of the spectator, of shelving responsibility. It is essential to rouse and mobilise the entire nation to respond to the urgent present issues, so that the Government shall act in time, shall establish the Second Front in Western Europe alongside the Soviet offensive, and shall thus ensure speediest victory over Fascism by the combined effort of the United Nations.

R. P. D.

August 20, 1943.

The Decisive Phase

by QUAESTOR

THE war has reached its decisive phase. The Germans, after being beaten on the Eastern Front all through the winter, are now being beaten in the summer. All the world now admits the superiority of the Red Army in armament, in trained men, in numbers and in morale over the Hitlerite armies. Bereft of their support, Italian Fascism has displayed its complete bankruptcy when faced with even a minor menace—the occupation of Sicily and the bombing of Italian cities—and Mussolini has been got rid of, amid the first rumblings of Italian popular revolt. Britain and America have now given the world the explicit and final demonstration—in Sicily—that they possess the means of landing large forces oversea, of protecting the landings by overwhelming R.A.F. superiority, and thereafter of waging victorious battles. A profound crisis is making itself felt in the camp of the enemy—in Hungary, in Bulgaria, in Finland. The neutral states have been drawing still more definite conclusions than were noted last month: the Swedish Government on August 5 announced the cancellation of the traffic agreement which permitted German troops to cross Sweden on their way to Norway and Finland, while the official Spanish press has been paying humble tribute to the power of British democracy, as obsequious as it was sudden. In the Far East the Japanese are on the defensive.

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As *War and the Working Class* declared in the first week of August:—

> The situation to-day is such that the victory of the freedom-loving peoples over Hitlerite Germany is possible in the very near future. . . . The necessary factors have been created for the defeat of Hitler. . . . Never since the war began have the conditions been so favourable for victory over Hitlerite Germany as they are to-day. . . . But the possibility of victory is not identical with victory itself. . . . To-day millions of people throughout the world are with great concern raising the question whether everything is being done to make timely use of the possibility of victory over Fascist Germany. And here the question of the Second Front in Europe arises in all its magnitude.

The latest Churchill-Roosevelt Conference has its main significance as a recognition of the fact that this decisive point in the war has been reached, when decisions have to be taken which are no longer of a purely military character, but are primarily political in their far-reaching importance.

It is sufficient briefly to cast one's eye over the war theatres as a whole to realise why this is so. Everywhere the enemy has been fought, at least to a standstill, and in the decisive theatre of Europe to the point of desperate and hopeless battle, with growing initiative on the side of the freedom-loving nations.

Last month we drew attention to the remarkable character of the summer fighting on the Eastern Front, which had put into the shade, by the magnitude of the forces involved, even the great victories won by the Red Army during the winter. With the development of the Soviet offensives that won back Orel, Bielgorod and Kharkov, this particular character has been emphasised still more in the communique of the Soviet Information Bureau issued on August 7. It showed over 5,000 German tanks destroyed or captured during the month from July 5 to August 6; while during the Soviet winter offensive from November 10, 1942, to March 31, 1943, 9,190 German tanks were captured or destroyed. Again, just under 2,500 German planes were destroyed during one month's fighting this summer. During the winter, just over 5,000 were destroyed or captured in four and a half months. Well might the Soviet military commentator, Colonel Vassiliev, say on the Moscow radio (August 9): "The battle of the Kursk salient, extraordinarily concentrated in time and involving such huge human and material resources, is without parallel in history." These successes have been made possible because of the immense development, among other things, of the Soviet armaments industry—a vast increase in the output of tanks and self-propelled guns, month by month: an increase in output of shells by 50 per cent. during the first six months of 1943, compared with the first half of last year, and of the most important types of munitions by eight times in the same period: a very great growth in the output of iron and steel.

These facts, as well as the nature of their reversals at the front, have been publicly admitted in German official pronouncements. The Nazis realise the perspectives which the Soviet victories have opened up. Their despairing references to the uninterrupted torrent of Soviet munitions and to the fire-power of Soviet artillery, their complaints of the "Satanic ingenuity" of the Red Army in overwhelming their flanks, are all part of the same picture. Nor are the lessons only confined to the Nazis. They are reflected in the changing morale of the German prisoners taken on the Eastern Front. The forty- and fifty-year-olds, mobilised by Hitler this year and sent hastily into battle, remember the years before Hitler, and they are no enthusiasts to die for a *regime* which they unheroically accepted, as fathers of families, when they saw, not only the bludgeons of Hitler's Storm Troopers, but the powerful international backing which Hitler enjoyed in the years of shame before the war. They are coming over to the Red Army with some tangible evidence of their will to cease fighting, where possible—with machine-guns and belts of cartridges, with boxes of hand-grenades, sometimes helping along Soviet wounded or escaped Soviet prisoners. It is this change which took expression, as we

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noted last month, in the formation of the Free Germany National Committee, at a Conference in Moscow on July 12 and 13. The response which this Committee has met in all the prisoner-of-war camps, among Germans of all shades of political and religious conviction, and among the German anti-Fascist colonies abroad in all countries, shows what a decisive change is reflected here too.

The rapid success of the Allied landing in Sicily also has its novel and special importance. Even though its smooth and effective operations were a logical development of the process that began long ago with the first commando raids, and passed on through the heroic trial of Dieppe to the large-scale experience of the North African landings, there nevertheless was a new and fateful significance in the very fact of its being well done—so well that results outpaced schedules by something like two or three weeks, at the very minimum computation. But even more important is the fact that the Sicilian operations were carried through swiftly: and in this their significance compared with those of North Africa was even greater. Six months for North Africa, where the local population was desperately anxious to help: one month for the fortress of Sicily, where the local population was too cowed even to think of intervening—this alteration of time-table has its political significance. Henceforth no honest politician or military commander can say that the Allies have not enough ships, or enough planes, or enough trained men, or enough experience, to undertake large-scale invasion of the continent.

The reaction of the Italian population has borne out completely what the advocates of a second front have always said would happen. The anxiety of the Italian soldiers to cease fighting, when faced with inexorable resolve by the Allies, was even more marked than in the closing stages of the North African campaign. But no one among the invading troops or the accompanying reporters was prepared for the scenes of enthusiasm with which the Italian population, after all its losses from bombardment, after its hunger and its other miseries, welcomed the liberating Anglo-American armies at Palermo and Catania. And there can hardly be any doubt that the Allied Governments themselves were taken completely by surprise by the wave of anti-war demonstrations that rolled over the whole of Italy, starting from the industrial north, and by the dismissal of Mussolini and his immediate Fascist assistants on July 25. Even the prospect of a front opening in Italy was sufficient to initiate events of this magnitude.

But cold hard fact must be faced. If Mussolini had been able to bring back from his meeting with Hitler at Verona, a few days before, the evidence of real and large-scale German assistance, he would not have fallen. The reason why he was unable to do so was that Hitler could not spare the troops in face of events on the Eastern Front. The Red Army is still engaging 200 German divisions and 30 satellite divisions: while in Sicily the Anglo-American forces engaged two German divisions and a few Italian divisions—even less than in North Africa. The operations in Sicily and their repercussions in Italy have justified all that was said about the importance of a real second front in Europe, and about the capacity of the Allies to open one: but they have made still more acute the fact that the Allies are still failing in their most solemn obligations to the freedom-loving coalition, so long as that front is not opened.

This holds good notwithstanding the terrible blows struck at German economic power by the R.A.F. Air bombardments and remain primarily a demonstration of might, but not mortal wounds. With weeks of progress, Berlin can be visited by the same scourging as Hamburg and the Ruhr towns: and after Berlin, Mannheim: and after Mannheim, the industrial centres of Saxony and Silesia: and after those, the industrial citadel of the Nazis in Bohemia. But this means long weeks and months, during which the Nazis at best

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are on the defensive, not reeling to their doom; during which the awful miseries and holocausts of the peoples in the occupied countries continue; during which the Red Army continues to bear frightful and now totally unjustifiable losses on behalf of its Allies.

Let this be remembered by the clever ones who tell us: "Don't be so impatient! We have our strategy, and it is bearing good fruit. For a minimum of losses, we are having great results in the Mediterranean. After the soft under-belly, the heart of Germany is being reached." We reply that the minimum of losses is for the Western Allies: for the Allies in occupied Europe, for the Eastern Ally, this "strategy" means the maximum of losses which ought to be shared more justly.

In passing, let us notice the wearing-down of the Japanese to the point of a complete standstill in their advance, and the commencement by the Allies of a "creeping" counter - offensive—whose tempo, totally unsuited to the conditions of Europe as we have seen, is fully justified by the special position of the Japanese, no less than by the exceptionally arduous conditions in which the American, Australian and British forces are fighting their way forward on the Pacific Islands, supported by the activities of Malayan, Indonesian and Philippine guerillas. The biggest problem facing the Japanese—and it is an insoluble one—is that of the impossibility of replacing their naval and merchant shipping losses. The immense pre-war imports of ships for scrapping have ceased. This circumstance means that supplies to the far-flung Japanese armies of occupation and exploitation for the benefit of Japanese industry of the raw materials in occupied territories, have alike become more and more difficult. A valuable but by no means exhaustive survey in the *Times* recently (August 3) gave some idea of the forced admissions of growing difficulty which have been wrung lately from leading Japanese militarists.

What emerges from this general survey of the war? It is that the Second Front is more than ever the key to victory this year. It is necessary to re-emphasise at this point that the Second Front doesn't mean the Atlantic, or the air over Germany, or raids on Southern Greece, or the B.B.C. nerve-war. It is not one of the five or eight or fifteen fronts which the dupes or mouthpieces of Fascist propaganda glibly speak of, here and in the United States, when they want to find excuses for leaving the Red Army alone to pour out its blood in the Allied cause. The Second Front means one on land; and in Europe; and in such a region of Europe as will force Hitler to distract forces to such a distance that they cannot shuttle backwards and forwards between the Eastern and Western Fronts—and on such a scale, above all, as radically to change the whole situation, ensuring the crushing superiority of the Soviet forces over the Hitlerite army. In other words, it is a question of distracting fifty or sixty German divisions, and a proportionate quantity of the satellite troops, to the west.

So long as this main question remains unsolved, it is idle to spend time, energy and eloquence on the inevitable political complications and difficulties which spring up as a consequence of the delay in opening the Second Front. Of course, the new situation created by the Allied success in Italy raises most seriously the question of the closest possible co-operation between Britain, the U.S.A. and the Soviet Union—as exemplified by the discussions around the composition and policy of the Anglo-American administrative machine for occupied territories called AMGOT. But if there is not the material co-operation represented by the existence of a Second Front, it is hardly likely that the Western Allies will seek willingly the counsel of the Soviet Government for co-operation in such a sphere. Again, the growing revolt of the Italian people necessitates quick, concerted and far-reaching political decisions by the Allies—and assuredly the muddles over whether "honourable capitulation" means the same as "unconditional surrender"; or

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whether the House of Savoy is to be congratulated or exposed as the accomplice of Fascism; or whether the eight days' armistice given Badoglio in fact, though not in form, was an encouragement and an assistance to the Italian people, or, on the contrary, gave Badoglio encouragement and the opportunity to call into Northern Italy a few German divisions for support against "chaos and anarchy" there: all these and similar muddles do not reflect the unity and political clarity so urgently necessary. But, as in the case of the cause of French liberation centring around the French Committee in North Africa and the person of De Gaulle, no one can seriously believe that if the major question still to be decided between the three bulwark Powers of the freedom-loving coalition—the Second Front—is settled satisfactorily, the other important problems of policy will long remain outstanding.

A keen and observant correspondent in Moscow, Mr. Alaric Jacob of the *Daily Express*, heavily underlined this very point when he wrote, at the end of a survey of Soviet press discussions on the situation in Italy (August 7):—

> I would say that the speed of the liquidation of Italy's "nuisance value" seems to them the first essential, but that the overriding permanent and inescapable task before the British and Americans remains what the Russians officially stated it to be on the second anniversary of Hitler's attack on them—"Everything now depends on how our Allies make use of the favourable situation for the creation of a Second Front on the European continent, because without a Second Front a victory over Hitlerite Germany is impossible."

Logic, and the plain facts of the military situation, must show that this opinion of those who still bear the main brunt of the war is also dictated by both reason and self-interest to every citizen of Great Britain and the United States.

Italian Fascism on the Scrapheap

by CLEMENS DUTT

THE ignominious passing of Mussolini marks not only the close of an epoch but the collapse of a myth. That myth is the myth of Fascism as a new social order, as the historical heir to capitalism, as a solution to all social problems, as a *regime* destined to endure for a thousand years. The curt dismissal of the dictator, who had strutted so pompously on the stage and who now so abjectly departs, is itself not more surprising than the rapidity and ease with which all the paraphernalia of the Fascist *regime* are discarded amid universal jubilation.

The leader is gone, the party badges torn off, the Fascist party itself dissolved. But this does not mean that Fascism itself is finished with. What it does mean is that the special claims made for the Fascist *regime* are exposed as a hollow sham. What it does show is that the Fascist *regime* is not a radical transformation of the social order, but a brutal form of capitalist dictatorship which can be assumed or be dispensed with when those in control deem it expedient.

Italian Fascism boasted of its strength. It vied with Nazism in pouring scorn on the feeble "pluto-democracies." It reserved its greatest venom for Soviet democracy and the Soviet system, the downfall of which it confidently predicted. But there could be no greater contrast than that between the Soviet system and Italian Fascism in conditions of hardship and trial. The former has proved its strength, emerging from a test of incredible severity with a steeled and united people whose heroism has won universal acclaim. Fascism, on the contrary, is seen to be correctly described as a ferocious but unstable system, whose corruption and inefficiency is glaringly exposed when put to the test.

It is not possible to get rid of the evil heritage of twenty-one years of Fascism in a single day. The forces that were suc-

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cessful in imposing Fascism on the Italian people are striving to maintain themselves in power, even at the cost of sacrificing all the trappings and popular ideology of the *regime*. But the huge signs of relief manifested at the departure of the dictator, the immediate emergence of political forces and tendencies which had been forcibly suppressed for twenty years, the general feeling that a period of nightmare was coming to an end, all give some indication of the true estimation of the bankrupt Fascist *regime* in the eyes of the people.

It is now possible to look back on these twenty-one years in the light of events and see what they have meant for Italy and what has been the value of the propaganda claims and testimonials of Fascism so widely advertised in this country. Characteristics and tendencies which could be a matter of controversy or, at least, of pseudo-justification, can be seen at their right value when judged by the outcome.

The faked conquest of power.

Italian Fascism made the most of its early appearance on the scene. It unblushingly described itself as a revolutionary transformation, as the conquest of power by an insurgent popular movement. Mussolini's "March on Rome" in October, 1922, made by him in a sleeping-car, is now a commonplace subject of ridicule. The march was financed by industrialists and equipped by the army and police. Mussolini was appointed by the King. It was the fear of mass revolutionary action, writes Professor Salvemini, that "caused Italian financial and industrial interests to underwrite Mussolini's bought-and-paid-for Fascism."

Fascism as a popular revolution was a fake. When the revolutionary working-class advance was checked and thrown into confusion from within after the last world war, the Italian *bourgeoisie* financed Fascist bands to exercise terror against the peasantry and the organised working-class movement. Fascism spread by organised terrorism, destruction and murder, but even after it had the backing of the State behind it, it was not until 1924, with the murder of the Socialist leader Matteotti, that it could feel at all firm in the saddle.

Italian Fascism's road to ruin.

In Italy, as in Germany, Fascism came into power with lavish demogogic promises on its lips. It promised the masses tranquility, order, peace and prosperity. How these promises were redeemed, the history of the last twenty years has shown.

Propagandists of Fascism dilated to the credulous on the "national rebirth" of Italy. Mussolini "dragged Italy out of the mire of socialism and in a few years made it the most successful and prosperous country in Europe" (*Saturday Review*, February 4, 1934). Such were the terms used to describe this poverty-stricken country, where the standard of life of the masses was going progressively downwards, and whose rulers were just then embarking on the criminal and ruinous Abyssinian adventure.

The swindle of Italian Fascist prosperity was exposed by Socialists years ago, but it is only now that the progressive ruin involved in the entire Fascist period has become generally acknowledged. Now it is already fashionable to describe the whole of Mussolini's reign as a "nightmare." Churchill, in his speech of July 27, speaks of the breaking of the spell which "held the masses for more than twenty years in physical, and even more in moral, subjection." The misery and bankruptcy into which Italy was plunged are seen to be due, not to the wickedness of one man, but to the working out of the contradictions and evils inherent in Fascism itself.

Typical is the Italian Fascist road to ruin by predatory war. Italian Fascism clearly saw that it had no other means than war to stave off its bankruptcy and the revolt of a disillusioned people, but each successive war adventure only accelerated the chaos and ruin which it was intended to avert. The benefits of "military glory" and colonial aggrandisement were depicted to the masses in the crudest colours as the path to certain prosperity. Mussolini's bombastic glori-

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fication of war was always a call to colonial exploitation. In his article for the Italian Encyclopaedia (1932) he says: "For Fascism, the growth of Europe, that is to say, the expansion of the nation, is an essential manifestation of vitality."

Lenin long ago characterised Italian imperialism as the "imperialism of paupers." He described the Italian *bourgeoisie* as "a crude, repulsively reactionary and rapacious *bourgeoisie* whose mouth waters at the expectation of a share in any plunder to which it is admitted." It must be acknowledged that the Italian Fascist *bourgeoisie* remained true to type, right up to its hopes of participating in the Hitlerite plunder of Europe and the Soviet Union.

Italian Fascism tried to play the role of a military "strong" power, but it only succeeded in becoming the vassal of a bigger robber and in dragging the Italian people into one calamity after another. The legend of Italian strength was bolstered up by those elements here who helped to sacrifice Abyssinia, who supported "non-intervention" in Spain, who applauded the "gentlemen's agreement" between Chamberlain and Mussolini in 1937, who propagated appeasement at all costs and even in 1940 were anxious to buy Mussolini out of the war. The Italian "Empire" was neither strong nor successful. It benefited only a handful of parasitic finance-capitalists, while it was paid for in blood and misfortune by the mass of the Italian people who, from the outset, showed their detestation of the *regime* by their reluctance to fight for it.

The fake of class solidarity.

For twenty years the apologists for Fascism have propagated the myth that Fascism is "the characteristic doctrine of our time" (Mussolini) and that it is "the system of the next stage of civilisation" (Mosley). History is already giving its verdict on that claim, and in the process it is also exposing the swindling nature of the grounds put forward by the Fascists as the basis for their claim, viz., the assertion that Fascism solves the class struggle and puts an end to the antagonism between Capital and Labour.

Facts have proved the contrary throughout the last twenty years. The Facist *regime* revealed itself as an increasingly brutal suppression of all working-class and popular organisation and expression along with increasingly ruthless and corrupt exploitation of the masses for a gang of Fascist bosses and multi-millionaires.

For twenty years wages went down, the cost of living went up and unemployment increased. In 1930, before the weight of the world economic crisis of capitalism of 1929-33, which was felt in Italy as heavily as in any capitalist country, Mussolini had to explain: "fortunately the Italian people is not yet accustomed to eat several times a day. Its standard of living is so low that it feels scarcity and suffering less." Between March, 1929, and March, 1933, unemployment rose from 309,000 to over 1,100,000. Between 1930 and 1941 meat consumption per head of the population fell from 44 lbs. per year to 11 lbs. per year. During the war consumption of meat was forbidden for six days per week. At the same time anything could be obtained on the black market which, the press now points out, became the real market as far as prices for the upper-class are concerned.

At the same time, the Fascist upper clique of industrial and financial magnates and rich landlords, headed by the Mussolini-Ciano family, accumulated immense fortunes and made huge profits. Before the war, between 1932 and 1938, the industrial share index rose from 44.6 to 84.6. Profits of the Montecatini armaments trust rose from 67,400,000 lire in 1935 to 148,600,000 lire in 1938. With the war, prices and profits rose to fantastic heights. Capitalist sharks and speculators swam in luxury while the masses of the people endured privation and misery. And the Fascist bosses were the most corrupt of all. Fascism turned out to be as corrupt and inefficient as ever Tsarism

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was. Italian Fascism proved to be no new social order, but a monstrous ulcer on the body politic which swelled up and burst, leaving behind a stench of corruption. It is sufficient to note that even the Badoglio government has had to give an assurance that one of its first steps will be to set up a Commission to investigate the ill-gotten gains of the chief gangsters of the Mussolini *regime*. Such was the likeness of the "new economic system that differs fundamentally from Liberal Capitalism and Communism."*

The swindle of the Corporate State.

The immediate sweeping away of the corporations and syndicates by the Badoglio Government, together with the other apparatus of Fascist humbug, provides a final exposure of the great imposture of the "Corporate State." It is the Fascist corporate state that was always put forward as the basis for the claim that Fascism was something essentially different from capitalism; it was the corporations that were described as "a weapon for the abolition of capitalism" (*Daily Herald*, June 6, 1934).

Yet these corporations were the biggest swindle of the lot. In 1927 the Grand Council issued its Charter of Labour, saying, "Corporations are the unifying organs of the factors of production." This was on the eve of the great wage reductions of May, 1927. Three years later the corporations were still unborn. In December, 1930, the first corporation came into existence, that of the Stage. Another three years passed and in January, 1934, a bill was introduced for establishing the corporations. Mussolini declared to the Senate: "We shall proceed with great caution, because our revolution has a whole century before it." Finally, in November, 1934, the corporations were inaugurated. The president and vice-president of each were appointed by Mussolini, the experts attached to them were appointed by Mussolini and the delegates of the Fascist party were also appointed by Mussolini, through the Secretary-General of the Party. No wonder that Professor Salvemini, after exhaustive analysis, comes to the conclusion:

> The Corporations which were glorified from 1927 to 1935 were the greatest humbug of the twentieth century.

This conclusion is borne out by the later history of these Corporations. Paolo Treves, in the *Sunday Times* (August 8, 1943) draws the following conclusions:—

> A major reason for Mussolini's downfall is the failure of the so-called Corporative State. . . . The first measures taken for the establishment of the Corporative State . . . were meant to keep the workers in check by abolishing the right to strike, by prohibiting any organisation outside the Fascist-controlled syndicates, and by placing the right of the employee *vis-a-vis* his employer in the hands of the Fascist trade unions. . . . That the members of the Chamber of Fascios and Corporations, who were called National Councillors, represented economic classes, or branches in the national life, was only a pretence. It was a well-known fact in Italy that National Councillors learnt from the newspapers of their appointment or dismissal. . . . The common people of Italy realised that Corporativism was practically nothing but a new form of compulsion by and subservience to the State.

The Corporations were the expression of the most reactionary monopolist interests, ensuring the complete subjection of the workers to the employers, abolition of the right to strike and enforcement of wage reductions, and at the same time organising capitalist industry and the capitalist state for aggressive war. This is the extent of the boasted planned economy of Fascism. Italian Fascism claimed that it carried out in practice what socialism promises utopianly but cannot perform. The reality of Mussolini's planned economy was a maximum concentration of capital for war purposes combined with a jobbery and corruption that kept the Fascist bosses at the top of the profitable amalgamated war enterprises.

The collapse of Fascist "new" ideology.

For twenty-one years Italian Fascism tried to impose its doctrines on the Italian people. The minds of a whole generation have been warped and deformed by Fascist education. Above all, Fascism has tried to wipe out all the his-

* Paul Einzig "Economic Foundations of Fascism" (1933).

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tory and traditions of the Italian labour movement.

Yet the astonishing thing is that, with every weapon of education and propaganda in the hands of the Fascist state, it has never been able to win the allegiance of the mass of the people. Much has been said of the necessity of re-educating the people of Fascist Germany and Italy. But in Italy, at any rate, the bulk of the working-class and peasantry never more than passively acquiesced in the *regime* of Fascist tyranny. Even among the youth active opposition to Mussolini was widespread.

The corrupt *regime* of Fascism, the violation of Italian national interests and traditions in predatory war, particularly against Greece and the Soviet Union, and in the conversion of the country into a lackey of Hitlerite Germany, and the reduction of the country to bankruptcy and catastrophe, made Mussolini and his system universally execrated. Even those who desired to preserve the essentials of the system were compelled to throw Mussolini overboard as the first step. The wave of popular demonstrations and strikes, unsuppressible even by martial law, was a true index of mass feeling.

Conclusions.

The ignoble outcome of the Italian Fascist *regime* exposes the true character of the whole Fascist epoch. It is seen to be a violently reactionary *regime* without constructive character, which achieves power by the aid of the most reactionary section of the *bourgeoisie*, thanks to divisions and confusion in the ranks of the working-class, and which is unable to solve any of the problems facing the mass of the people.

Fascism as a new idea, as a facade for imperialist corruption and reaction, stands exposed and is cast aside when no longer effective.

The first stage of the crisis of Fascism, the initial stage of its breakup, has begun. The mass movement against Fascism in Italy, which is part of the national liberation movement of all the European peoples, has awakened to life, has forced the disappearance of Mussolini, and is pressing forward towards the complete overthrow of Fascism.

Italian Fascism, however, is only a vassal of the stronger partner and cannot be eradicated without the defeat of the greater criminal. Its overthrow requires, therefore, the combination of military defeat and the pressure of the mass movement from within.

The Fascist road stands revealed as the road to ruin and catastrophe for the mass of the people. The so-called "Fascist era" is passing. Never in the future will the people willingly choose that road.

CORRECTION.—In review of Grierson's *Books on Soviet Russia* (August Issue), "Ernst von Solomon" should read "Ernst von Salomon."

The Editor of LABOUR MONTHLY will be very glad to receive contributions in the form of finished articles or of suggestions and data for articles. The customary proviso must be made that no responsibility is undertaken for manuscripts sent to him nor can he promise to enter into correspondence regarding contributions not accepted.

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The French Liberation Committee

by FRANK PITCAIRN

IT was in May of this year that the United Resistance Council was formed in Paris—an event greeted at the time as the biggest political event in France since June, 1940.

It was formed at a moment when the struggle of the *francs-tireurs* and the guerillas in France was reaching new peaks of vigour, of heroism, and also of hardship and sacrifice. And in the eyes of all true French patriots, to whatever party they might belong, it was clear that the formation of that Committee must without delay be complemented by the unification of French forces and resources outside the home country.

It was not, however, until the end of July that this objective—proclaimed as urgent by the Resistance Council itself—was at length fully achieved at Algiers. But it is beyond doubt that it was the impulse of the Underground in France which first enabled General de Gaulle to go to Algiers, and led to the establishment there of the Committee of National Liberation.

Even before the fuller unity accomplished in July, and at a greater pace since, the Committee was tackling with energy and courage the grave and urgent tasks before it. Fascist organisations—political and economic—have been suppressed. Anti-Fascist prisoners—including the International Brigaders — have been released. The Communist Party and press have been legalised in democratic fashion. A tribunal to conduct a full purge of Vichyite elements in the administration and to punish such guilty men as the notorious Pucheu has been set up. Big strides have been taken towards the reorganisation and unification of the army. And within the Committee itself there has been a drawing together of formerly mutually hostile elements on a scale which has invested the Committee with new authority, wider than that of any single personality.

It would be a distortion of the facts to pretend that foreign political intervention was alone responsible for the divisions and dissensions which for so long existed, first between the Fighting French Committee in London and a section of the leading French authorities at Algiers. If genuine and serious divisions of opinion, of aim, of interest and of political principle had not existed, intervention from outside would have had no troubled waters in which to fish.

The real charge against Anglo-American policy in North Africa—with all the repercussions that a policy in North Africa must have upon France itself—is that it failed to recognise where the real patriotic forces were to be found, and in its opposition to them seemed prepared to paralyse the whole resources of the French Empire rather than permit the democratic forces a natural development which would have been and is now obviously of much greater "military expediency" than any of the shifts and devices which it was sought to justify on that score.

The position of the Algiers Committee can be seen in full relief only if it is seen in the three distinct relationships which really determine its nature and perspectives. These are its relationship to the resistance movement inside France, its relationship to the specific situation in colonial North Africa, and its relationship to the Allied powers.

Although various refugees from France —not all of them by any means having any close relationship with the most healthy resistance forces—were at Algiers before General de Gaulle was finally permitted to go there, it was always pretty well recognised that at that time the Fighting France organisation in London was incomparably more closely linked to the resistance movement in the country, and more quickly susceptible to the demands and directives which came from

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there. The situation was given formal expression at the time of the formation of the French Council of Resistance.

It is true to say that despite many weaknesses, and in some cases a sort of "sectarianism" which was the product of isolation in London combined with an exaggerated importance attached to particular leaders and personalities, the arrival of the Fighting French representatives at Algiers did open a door through which the keen wind from France blew with enormously invigorating effect.

It is one of the most notable of General de Gaulle's many achievements that he, throughout the whole hard struggle of the last weeks in London, unswervingly proclaimed and maintained against all comers that the ultimate authority to whose demands all others must be subordinated was the people of France. He insisted against repeated oppositional attempts that the Underground must find full representation in any form of organisation established at Algiers. And at an early date he energetically pressed the demand for the creation at Algiers of a Consultative Assembly, alongside the Committee, in which the Underground would also be fully represented.

The release of the twenty-six Communist deputies, the legalisation of the Communist Party in Algiers, and the almost immediate appearance of the newspaper *Liberté* were subsequent factors of at least equal importance in tightening the bonds binding North Africa to the French resistance movement. In this respect *Liberté* has brought about a really profound change in the whole "climate" of Algeria. From a study of the papers which existed there before *Liberté* came out one could often have gained the impression that the war against Hitlerism, the struggle of the peoples, the gigantic effort of the Soviet people, even the doings of the French resisters, were all matters occurring in the moon—or on a cinema screen. In the comparatively brief period since their release the Communists of North Africa have carried out a gigantic work in the raising of the fighting spirit of the people, and in creating a sense of solidarity between them and all the other enemies of Hitlerism everywhere.

It is a task which is complicated precisely by the second factor which I mentioned as basically affecting the position of the Committee—that is to say, the specific colonial character of the territory in question. Without drawing analogies which might be crude and misleading, or attempting a detailed analysis of North African economy which would take too much space, one can see at every turn in Algiers how seriously the colonial position, the extreme and increasing poverty of the great mass of the native population, the greed and arrogance and fear of the wealthy colonials, the gross inequalities in the conditions, including wage conditions, of the native workers and the whites, all combine to tend to produce a situation and an attitude towards the war which has been witnessed in more or less similar form in every other colonial territory.

There are those, on the one hand, who would cynically exploit the position of the Arabs and the Berber peoples for purposes which, so far from contributing to the destruction of that Hitlerism which is to-day's main menace to all of them, would produce nothing but confusion and paralysis of the war effort. There are others who, from the opposite viewpoint, would cheerfully produce that same paralysis rather than concede those drastic reforms which are necessary if the demand of all anti-Hitlerites for a true mobilisation of North African manpower and resources is to be fulfilled.

A majority of the big "colons" who normally dominate the political life of Algeria—at least outside the city of Algiers itself and one or two other centres—are profoundly suspicious of the Committee, which they regard as dangerously "radical" affair: and in this they join forces with all those other reactionaries from France itself—some of them bankers, some mere speculators, others uprooted representatives of powerful

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financial groups—who fear the Committee not only for what it may do in Algiers, but because they see in it the first steps towards a new France in which the abuses and corruption upon which they flourished so fatally will be eliminated by the action of the people, determined that the fourth Republic is to be a Republic worthy of the suffering and the heroism on which it will have been built.

It is a situation with all too obvious repercussions upon the third factor which I have mentioned—that is to say, the relationship of the Committee to the Allies. For it need hardly be said that the enemies of the Committee in Algiers—some of them with excellent international financial connexions—are sleeplessly on the alert to secure outside backing (at a price if necessary) for their own projects of wrecking and sabotage: and the mere existence of the belief, even if it were baseless, that the British and American Governments would prefer stagnation of the war effort to a swift democratic advance, is sufficient to give dangerous encouragement to the wreckers and to render precarious the position of the Committee and all that it stands for.

It is against this background that can be judged the extraordinary achievement of the Committee in achieving a degree of real unity, and establishing a degree of political and military organisation which only a few weeks ago would have seemed still far out of reach. As Francois Billoux wrote in *Liberté* the other day: "Union is achieved. Now to work. Now for action."

The County of London Plan

by TED BRAMLEY

THE publication of the County of London Plan is an outstanding event. From the earliest days, London has grown in an arbitrary manner. The rate of growth, the degree of chaos, reached fantastic proportions after the last war. Today London is the largest anarchic conglomeration of factories, houses, roads and railways in the world. The harmful effect on the lives of its ten million inhabitants is beyond computation. All previous attempts to plan London have been frustrated. The manner of its growth is an expression of the unbridled, anti-social domination of vested interests in land, industry and finance, characteristic of capitalism.

Yet within London have grown the forces which increasingly challenge vested interests. It has become a great centre of socialist ideas, activity and organisation. The Labour Party has attained dominance in the County Council. The war has given impetus to the spread of progressive ideas and aspirations among the people. Millions of workers, professional people, scientists and technicians, see that life can no longer go on in the old way. This consciousness is inherent in and expressed by the new County of London Plan. The social, economic and political implications are a challenge to everything that monopoly capitalist interests stand for. Its repercussions can and will be far-reaching.

The plan, prepared by Mr. Foreshaw, Chief Architect to the L.C.C., and Prof. Patrick Abercrombie of the London University, has been circulated to the Government, local authorities and the public, but is not yet adopted by the L.C.C. It deals with the administrative County of London (L.C.C. area), excluding the City, and not with the Greater London area.

The authors list four main defects in present-day London. First the traffic congestion; second, depressed housing lacking social amenities; third, inadequate and badly distributed open spaces; fourth, the indiscriminate mixture of housing and industry. The solution adopted by the authors of the plan is to embark on "conditioned yet comprehensive replanning," which means to take advantage of geo-

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graphical, social and economic features of London as they are, eliminating those which are harmful.

They plan to facilitate London's threefold function: first, as a community in which people live, work and play; second, as the metropolitan centre of Government, culture, commerce; and third, as a machine with special reference to locomotion. Their proposals for this cover communities, housing, industry, open spaces, etc.

Communities, which have grown up around what were towns and villages, and which have retained their identity in the midst of the vast built-up area, are seen as a fundamental characteristic of London. The Plan sets out to emphasise and re-establish the identity of these communities by surrounding them with open spaces. Fast roads and railways will not cut through communities, destroying amenities, but will go between them. Each community, approximating in size to a small London borough, is to be provided with all the elements essential to a full community existence—houses and flats, industry (suitably located), open spaces, facilities for recreation and leisure, hospitals, schools, shops, civic centres, etc. Smaller neighbourhood units, centred around each elementary school, are contemplated. London as an entity will function and develop more effectively as a result.

Housing is regarded as the foremost task of reconstruction. Private enterprise and public enterprise are envisaged as playing a part. The whole East End and large parts of South-East London are scheduled for complete rebuilding. In other areas the large houses, structurally sound, are to be converted into properly equipped flats and maisonnettes. They allow for a decline of 500,000 in the county population, leaving three-and-a-half million people to be housed. They believe this is only possible if two-thirds are accommodated in flats and one-third in houses. At this rate the population can be evenly distributed, averaging 136 per acre, with four acres of open space per 1,000 (more than twice as much as at present). Houses on the terraced principle with gardens, giving safety from roads, are suggested for large families. Flats of two, four, and up to ten stories high, surrounded by open spaces, with lifts in all blocks over four stories, are proposed. Every family is to have a decent self-contained dwelling. They suggest consideration for constructing houses to last for a relatively shorter period to allow for changing taste and technique. Vital to their whole conception of good housing is the principle of being allowed to re-plan and construct an entire area, planning the disposition of housing, industry, schools, shops, as a comprehensive whole. The ideal average sized site worthy of planned construction they deem to be 100 acres.

Industry has been carefully surveyed. In 1938 three-quarters of a million workers were engaged in productive industry alone in 37,000 workshops and factories. Industry has been tending to move from the centre towards the outer areas. The planners aim to influence the location of industry in order to relieve the congestion in Central London and reduce time and money spent by workers in travelling. Within the communities industry should not be scattered throughout the residential areas, destroying the social amenities, but placed in suitable positions and "trading estates," or "flatted factories" for smaller enterprises. They seek powers to move obnoxious, non-conforming industries. They visualise no important change in the disposition of the London Docks.

Open space is to be greatly increased and more evenly distributed. At present London has 1.88 acres of open space per 1,000 population, as against the minimum proposed by the experts of seven acres. They propose to increase this to four acres per 1,000, acquiring 5,428 acres (4,157 at present built on) for conversion into open spaces. It is to be more evenly distributed to increase the present half acre per 1,000 population in places like

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Deptford, Finsbury, Stepney, etc. It is proposed to link the open spaces together to surround the communities, and provide park lands stretching from the centre right out to the open country. More playing fields, swimming pools, open-air restaurants, will enhance greatly the value of the open spaces.

Transport is dealt with in the following way. Main, fast, through-traffic roads radiate from the centre like the spokes of a wheel, and are linked together by three ring roads at intervals from the centre. Slow, local traffic is segregated. The main roads go between and not through the communities. The advantages are speed, greater safety, far less congestion. Entrances and exits to these main roads are limited. In the centre of London two main tunnels, one East-West and one North-South, for through traffic, help to relieve congestion. Complete electrification of all railways is anticipated, making possible the abolition of the sordid overhead viaducts which so shockingly disfigure London to-day. Traffic coming towards the centre will go underground at a suitable point and arrive at one of a limited number of main termini. Through loops and two levels giving direct communication with the general London Underground system are planned. Markets, which have so contributed to London's congestion, Covent Garden, Smithfield, are scheduled for dispersal to more suburban points, apart from sample buying. No very definite proposal is made for an air transport terminus.

Zoning is employed as a convenient method of classifying certain areas. They zone the City and Holborn as a business centre; Whitehall and Westminster as the Government centre; the West End as a residential, shopping, entertainment and cultural centre, etc. They employ the principle of precinctal planning to facilitate this. This means marking off a whole area and so designing the streets and approaches as to prevent traffic cutting through. The south bank of the river is to be completely redeveloped, from County Hall to Blackfriars and the Elephant and Castle, providing open promenades, theatres, youth centres, and offices. Two new bridges across the river at this point are suggested. The Thames, described as London's largest single open space, of which only 25 per cent. is open to the public, is to be cleared to make 45 per cent. accessible.

Strong emphasis is laid upon the new powers which Parliament will need to give to the L.C.C., including the provisions of the Scott, Uthwatt and Barlow Commissions. Finance is not dealt with to any great extent. The point is made that planning in itself is not necessarily a cause for heavy expenditure, but, on the contrary, the absence of planning involves the community in stupendous losses. First, second and third stage periods covering a total of fifty years are proposed.

That, in brief compass, is a fair summary of what is proposed by the authors of the County Plan. The questions, is it a good plan, is it a practical plan, is it an adequate plan, spring to mind. It is only too easy to see defects, the many problems it does not face, and to be cynical about it ever being realised. I think it is a good plan, containing some splendid, progressive proposals. How far it is improved by amendment and carried into effect, is entirely in the hands of the people and the organised labour movement. There are many fundamental and controversial issues raised. Some will say the attempt to preserve and cultivate local communities is impossible and wrong. I don't think so. Some will object to the attempt to house millions of people in the county area at all, and to the large proportion of flats. I would not agree with them. I think the Plan's proposals are sound in this respect. Most will agree with the proposals about open spaces, roads and railways, with certain amendments. Many will criticise (I think rightly) the inadequate proposals for control of industrial location, for example, the Docks; the tempo at which the plan is realised, spread over fifty years, weakens its appeal to the

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people. The absence of sufficiently worked out proposals on finance will give a weapon to anti-planners. There are, furthermore, many fundamental questions which will have to be faced.

First, it suffers from the great defect that it covers only the county area. Prof. Abercrombie is engaged on a plan for the Greater London area to be submitted to the Minister of Town and Country Planning, and the connection between the two may be expressed there. One thing is certain. A plan for London must, if it is to be effective, cover the whole 2,417 square miles and the ten million population covered by the London traffic area. This need not prevent the L.C.C. from adopting a Plan, and preparing to implement it within its own area. On the contrary, the more the L.C.C. advance in that direction, the sooner will the whole issue be forced to a solution.

Secondly, the private ownership of the land involves such crippling burdens in compensation and such direct obstruction, as to make even a fraction of what is proposed impossible. National control and ownership of the land, is, in my opinion, indispensable. Certain recommendations of the Scott, Uthwatt and Barlow Commissions would be helpful, but are inadequate.

Thirdly, the reform of London local government machinery, long overdue in any case, will be required. It is fantastic to conceive of effective planning when the City Corporation maintains its ancient independence, and 133 different planning authorities are proceeding piecemeal. London requires a new central authority replacing or expanding the existing L.C.C. and covering the entire Greater London area. It needs, in addition, a new type of lower local authority replacing the existing medley of metropolitan boroughs, county boroughs, urban district councils, municipal boroughs, etc. These two new units of London local government, democratically elected, sharing the functions of local government, could plan and govern comprehensively and efficiently.

Fourthly, the London local government must be armed with adequate powers for planning and controlling London's development. They must include the right to acquire land for all purposes essential to the community, to build every type of building, to control all forms of construction, the siting of industry. Furthermore, I believe they must include power to control certain industries and services vital to the community, at present in the hands of private enterprise or statutory bodies, such as the London Passenger Transport Board, the Port of London Authority, the Metropolitan Water Board, Gas and Electricity services.

Whatever may be the limitations of the County of London Plan, there is no doubt that it represents great progressive aspirations growing among the people. It offers the means for rallying the forces of progress against the forces of reaction. Those who are opposed are showing their hands. They are the traditional representatives of the monopoly interests who wish to preserve the right to ride roughshod over the interests of the community as a whole. Sir Samuel Gluckstein, in the Council Chamber, said: "I doubt if we can afford the arterial roads." Captain Webb, leader of the Tory Party in the Council, in a letter to *The Times*, seeks to preserve this, that and the other, which means—no progress.

The organised labour movement can and must rally the people of London for the great aim of a better-planned London, for all that is good in the County Plan, and for all the additional things deemed necessary. Millions of people will learn in the process the advantage offered by a socialist system, the limitations imposed by capitalism, and draw the necessary conclusions.

¶ *The attention of readers is called to the subscription rates on page* 275.

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For Educational Advance

by G. C. T. GILES, B.A.

THE Government White Paper on "Educational Reconstruction" presents the people of Britain with a great opportunity which must be seized and utilised to the full.

The White Paper sets the aim . . . .

to secure for children a happier childhood and a better start in life: to ensure a fuller measure of education and opportunity for young people and to provide means for all for developing the various talents with which they are endowed and so enriching the inheritance of the country whose citizens they are. . . . But diversity must not impair the social unity within the educational system which will open the way to a more closely knit society and give us strength to face the tasks ahead. . . . In the youth of the nation we have our greatest national asset . . . . It is the object of the present proposals to strengthen and inspire the younger generation.

If words mean anything, those words should mean the end of the niggardly conception of education as a charitable dispensation to the deserving poor and the unashamed class distinctions which besmirch the history of British education.

For the first time in an official publication the education system is submitted to a comprehensive survey and analysis which does to a considerable extent lay bare its class and charitable origins, its defects and inadequacies.

We are reminded of the "major anachronism" in Section 42 of the Education Act of 1921 (only twenty-two years old!): "It shall be the duty of the parent of every child between the ages of five and fourteen . . . to cause that child to receive efficient elementary instruction in reading, writing and arithmetic."

The Dual System, with its "endless complications in administration, which retard educational progress, engender friction and consume time and energies which could be spent to much better purpose" is described as "inconsistent with proper economy and efficiency." The results of the system are stated bluntly in the following figures:—

(*a*) Of the 753 schools still remaining on the Board's Black List of Schools with defective premises, 541 are non-provided schools.

(*b*) On March 31, 1939, 62 per cent. of the children of eleven years of age and over in council schools were in senior schools or departments specially organised for children of that age, while the corresponding figure for non-provided schools was 16 per cent.

The conclusion reached is that the non-provided schools are quite unable to provide large numbers of children even with healthy and decent school conditions.

The paper stresses the lack of nursery schools, speaks of the junior schools as the "Cinderellas" of the education system, describes classes of fifty as "not education but mass production," condemns unreservedly the special place or scholarship examination which "subjects children at the age of eleven to the strain of a competitive examination on which, not only their future schooling, but their future careers may depend."

The fee-paying system in secondary schools is stated to offend against the canon that "the nature of a child's education should be determined by his capacity and promise and not by the financial circumstances of his parents."

Under this clear and objective analysis the present system stands condemned. It must be "recast."

In the final paragraphs of the White Paper the proposals are thus summarised:—

A. The legislative changes proposed will include:—

(*a*) The improvement of the facilities for the training of children below compulsory school age by the provision of nursery schools wherever they are needed;

(*b*) The raising of the school leaving age to 15 without exemptions, with provision for a later raising to 16;

(*c*) The completion of the reorganisation of the present public elementary schools, so that well-designed and equipped primary schools are available for all children up to the age of 11 and secondary schools, with varied facilities for advanced work, for all children over that age;

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(*d*) An amendment of the existing law so as

(i) To emphasise the position of religious instruction as an essential element of education; and

(ii) To enable the schools provided by voluntary bodies to play their part in the proposed developments;

(*e*) The introduction of a system of compulsory part-time education in working hours for young persons up to the age of 18;

(*f*) The provision of adequate and properly co-ordinated facilities for technical and adult education;

(*g*) The extension of the existing facilities for securing the health and physical well-being of children and young persons;

(*h*) The introduction of a system of inspection and registration of all independent schools which cater for children of compulsory school age;

(*i*) The adjustment of the present system of local educational administration to the new educational layout.

B. The changes to be effected by administrative action, include:—

(*a*) A progressive decrease in the size of classes in primary schools;

(*b*) The abolition of the present Special Place examination and the adoption of other arrangements for the classification of the children when they pass from primary to secondary schools.

(*c*) The introduction of a common Code of Regulations applicable to secondary schools of all types, so framed as to secure that standards of accommodation and amenities generally are raised to the level of those of grammar schools;

(*d*) The remodelling of the curriculum of secondary schools;

(*e*) The further expansion of the Youth Service;

(*f*) The improvement of the facilities for enabling poor students to proceed to the universities;

(*g*) The reform of the present methods of recruiting and training teachers.

On the whole these proposals can be described as a broad programme whose main essentials for educational advance should be strongly supported, as at the same time it will be necessary to press for amendment where it falls short.

And fall short it does in some important details, where the educational considerations which have dictated the sweeping condemnation of weaknesses and defects and the fearless exposure of obstacles to reform give place to a too tender regard for vested interests.

This is very obvious in the sections dealing with the proposals for the reform of the Dual System. The voluntary schools are offered three options. Under the first they may obtain for post-primary schools up to 75 per cent. of the cost, *while retaining complete control.* Under the second they will receive 50 per cent. of the cost of modernisation, *while retaining full control.* Under the third, even though the full cost will fall on public funds, *the building remains the property of the Church* and *the managers retain an important measure of control,* including the right to appoint "reserved teachers" (*i.e.*, teachers subject to a denominational religious test) and even consultation in the appointment of the head teacher. This is a blood transfusion rather than a purge and may well prolong indefinitely all the anachronisms and divided responsibilities which are so mercilessly exposed earlier in the paper.

Nor is this all. Under the heading "Religious Education" it is claimed—quite without evidence or argument—that "there is a very general wish that religious education should be given a more defined place in the life and work of the schools." On the contrary—there is overwhelming evidence that the undenominational teaching at present given in the schools and the safeguards of the Cowper Temple clause are very widely accepted by parents and teachers. Nevertheless, those safeguards are apparently to be removed. Statutory religious observance, inspection of religious instruction, specialist teachers—indeed, the whole of the notorious Archbishops' Five Points—are to be imposed on the council schools. Past experience of clerical interference in the schools will not encourage teachers or parents to accept meekly this gratuitous withdrawal of a long-standing and almost universally accepted settlement.

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It is hoped that the Trades Union Congress and other working-class organisations will be less inclined to appeasement and will stand by their policy of abolition of Dual Control and prohibition of denominational teaching in schools in receipt of grants from public funds.

A second point of weakness is the vagueness of the paragraphs dealing with the post-primary system. In the introduction it is stated categorically that the standard of accommodation and amenities in the secondary stage will be steadily raised to the level of the best. Elsewhere references are made to the privileged position of the grammar school, to the handicaps and lower prestige of the junior technical and senior schools. Yet all three types of schools are to be retained under new names, while the inequality of leaving age will not be removed until some unspecified date. Nor is there any guarantee as to the equality of staffing between the three types of school. The future of the Direct Grant schools—a halfway house to the Public School—and of the Public Schools themselves is left to the decision of the Fleming Committee. Prohibition of fees and a single secondary code will go some way towards the removal of these inequalities, but nothing short of the single or multilateral school (favourably commented on elsewhere in the paper) and the raising of the leaving age to sixteen at the earliest possible moment will complete the job. Nor must there be any grant from public funds for the so-called Public Schools, whose sole reason for existence is the preservation of class distinction.

Finally, the financial provisions, discreetly tucked away in an appendix at the end, act as a cold douche on the hopeful enthusiasm engendered by the body of the paper. It is a shock to discover that in the first year of the educational plan, not timed to begin till eighteen months after the end of the war, the additional expenditure will amount to the microscopic sum of £1,100,000! The cost of ten bombers!

No "recasting" is envisaged until four and a half years after the end of the war, and then only to the tune of £7,200,000, which might provide a dozen new schools of secondary standard! For technical and adult education, admitted to be deplorably inadequate, additional expenditure does not reach one million until the seventh year of the plan. Even in the seventh year (*i.e.*, eight-and-a-half years after the end of the war) additional expenditure will only amount to forty millions—the cost of two-and-a-half days of the war.

Once again considerations other than educational are allowed to overshadow the hopeful promise of the programme. But the jovial cynicism of Sir Kingsley Wood must not be allowed to postpone indefinitely "the education of the people upon which the fate of this country depends"—to quote the words of the White Paper.

These are serious weaknesses. But they are not inherent in the plan. Indeed, they are in direct contradiction to the stated aims of the plan, due to the tender regard for vested interests and privilege. But neither the labour movement nor the common people of this country are in a mood to tolerate such tenderness. Nor will they tolerate other forms of obstruction or attempts to emasculate, delay or wreck a real attempt to achieve equality of educational opportunity for the children of the nation. The President of the Board of Education has stated that the publication of the White Paper opens a period of public discussion. The labour movement will take full advantage of the opportunity provided by the months ahead. Together with the teachers' organisations, it will be able to rouse an enthusiastic demand from the common people for an Education Bill which fulfils the high aims set forth in the introduction and to sweep aside the limitations and restrictions imposed by vested interest and privilege.

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Hegel's Philosophy of Right

by ROY and FANIA PASCAL

PROFESSOR KNOX has done an outstanding piece of translation, marked by insight into Hegel's meaning and care for our own language. Good translation implies interpretation, and hardly any fault can be found with Professor Knox's version. The English reader should now find Hegel's political philosophy intelligible. The Notes are good, based on the best German editors; and even if the historical references are still a little thin, this edition does locate Hegel in his own times.

What is the peculiar significance of this work of Hegel's? We do not expect his views on the state to be a guide to modern problems—though it is a characteristic fault of philosophers to argue whether Hegel condones or not the totalitarian state (see the controversy in *Philosophy*, 1940). The first thing we ask is: what did Hegel's views mean in the circumstances of his time? And the second: what is there in his outlook or method that is scientific, *i.e.*, what truths regarding social relationships can we learn from him? The brightest light on both these questions is given by a study of Hegel's importance for Marx, his disciple and deepest critic, who wrote a detailed criticism of the *Philosophy of Right* in 1842-3 (*Marx-Engels Gesamtausgabe*, I.i.). Neither Professor Knox, nor any other of the participants in the *Philosophy* discussions, refers to Marx's criticism!

For the Germans of his time, Hegel's *Philosophy of Right* was more than a theoretical treatise; it was a political tract, written in a time of great political tension. Of Plato's *Republic* he wrote, with rare insight: "The *Republic*, which passes proverbially as an empty ideal, is in essence nothing but an interpretation of the nature of Greek ethical life. Plato was conscious that there was breaking into that life in his own time a deeper principle (of personal freedom) which could appear in it directly only as a longing still unsatisfied, and so only as something corruptive (of the old). . . . His genius is proved by the fact that the principle on which the distinctive character of his Idea of the state turns is precisely the pivot on which the impending upheaval of the world turned at that time" (*i.e.*, the conflict between state-power and "free infinite personality"). These words are true of Hegel's own political philosophy. Marx wrote of it: "People have attacked Hegel because of his views on ethics. But he did nothing but expound the ethics of the modern state and of modern personal rights."

It may seem curious that Hegel's political philosophy is contained in his *Philosophy of Right*. But it is essentially a part of ethics. Morality he considers not as a system of values distinct from society, but as the expression of society, developing in history with society. He lashed out at contemporary moralists who preached morals which were unattainable and unreal, a mere source of emotional, subjective comfort. For him ethics are incorporated in social relationships, law, institutions, and are meaningless unless they can find a social form. And Marx appreciated this achievement when he wrote: "It is a great, though one-sided, merit of Hegels to have indicated the true place of ethics in society."

Hegel's avowed object was to interpret the existing world. He wrote: "Philosophy cannot consist in teaching the state what it ought to be; it can only show how the state, the universe of the ethical, is to be understood." But for his contemporaries and the following generation he did stand for an ought-to-be; he himself undermined the principle he maintained; and Marx defined the synthesis of this contradiction when he wrote: "The philosophers have only interpreted the world differently; the point is, to change it."

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Though Hegel's avowed object was to explain the existing world, he recognised it as changing. The mystical principle of Reason, which was realising itself in the history of the world, not only conveniently justified many an antiquated form, but also justified new forms. Any historian can see that the state described by Hegel is not the Prussia of those days; it has many features far in advance of the backward, absolutist Prussia he knew. Marx says that the reality of Hegel's ideas lay "beyond the Rhine," in constitutional France or England. The trouble in interpreting Hegel is his method. He justifies all social forms in their historical existence, and on the other hand insists that their change is also historically necessary. Most of our modern philosophers are so unable to grasp the elements of historical dialectics that they can only ask: is a thing right, or is it wrong? while Hegel says, a thing is right at one period and wrong at another. It is true that Hegel's way of saying things often suggests time-serving —he was writing the *Philosophy of Right* at a time of fierce oppression and persecution of liberals. Over and over again we are startled by his defence of reactionary forms, of slavery, the absolute power of the state, the divine nature of monarchy, etc. But we then find that the slave is justified in rebellion as soon as he grows conscious of his moral worth as a human being; that the object of the state is to satisfy the personal aims and interests of the citizens; that the divinity of the monarch consists in his being completely without influence—"he has only to say 'yes' and dot the 'i.'" Sometimes these opposites stand unresolved in Hegel's work, representing the struggle of the society in which he lived. Thus he justified primogeniture and the specific right of the land-owning class to play the chief part in the state; and at the same time he repeatedly asserts the rights of all men to all offices of state and all professions. Many of those who criticise him for these inconsistencies forget that they too justify the House of Lords in the name of democracy; here Hegel is only guilty of expressing the ethic of actual society, as Marx said.

Hegel has been most attacked for his assertion of the over-riding power and "reality" of the state, as compared with the rights of individuals and corporations. Much liberal criticism of this view ignores, however, the actual fact that the state does assert these powers, does claim a morality which over-rides that of personal relations. Here again, Hegel is not preaching an ought-to-be, but trying to wrestle with a fact which every day becomes more of a reality in the modern world. Hegel's appreciation of the importance of the state was due, of course, not so much to his study of Hobbes or other thinkers, as to the deep influence of his transference to Prussia, where for the first time he lived in a great strong state, where far-sighted interests were at play, instead of in the close atmosphere of pettifogging German provinces. And we must remember that, within this divine Leviathan, Hegel insisted there must be "subjective" freedom, civil rights for Jews, trial by jury (the highest form of jurisdiction in his view), separation of Church and State: a whole list of democratic demands, a programme for the youth of his times.

The specific form of state which Hegel recommends certainly leaves a sour taste in the mouth of the student. A "constitutional" monarchy, in which Parliament is an assembly of the representatives of the different classes, not elected by universal suffrage, and in which the land-owners wield essential power: this is not so very different from what Frederick William III promised (though even this was not carried out). The secret of these views of Hegel's is to be found in the actual social structure of Prussia at that time, in the backwardness of the middle class. He writes: "Civil servants and the members of the executive constitute the greater part of the middle class"; and he emphasises over and over again the pettiness of the artisan class, its lack of political con-

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sciousness. Hegel lived before a capitalistic bourgeoisie had formed in Germany; the form of his state reflects actual conditions.

One of Hegel's main problems was, indeed, this: How can the "people," the petty traders, immersed in local business and limited by the narrowest horizon, learn to understand the interests of the state: how can they become politically conscious?—a problem which occupied the Freiherr von Stein and Fichte before him, as it did the generation of liberals to which Marx belonged. This problem itself is a progressive, almost revolutionary one; and Hegel's praise of the political consciousness of the English bourgeoisie indicates the lines along which his thought ran. But he did not, like certain German liberals of his day, simply want to introduce the constitutions of England or France into Germany. He saw that the German social structure and social consciousness were not adequate to such a demand. And further, he knew too much about England and France to want merely to imitate them—a lesson Marx learnt from him.

What were his reflections when he turned his eye abroad, to England and France, as he often did? From Adam Smith, Say, and Ricardo he learnt much about the development of industry and modern society, and much from contemporary history, from the discussions in the English Parliament preceding the Reform Bill, etc. He noticed that capitalistic accumulation of wealth involves the creation of a proletariat (he calls it, in that early, unorganised stage, a pauperised rabble), which is cut off from well-being, freedom and culture. "It hence becomes apparent that despite an excess of wealth, civil society (*i.e.*, men in their economic relations only) is not rich enough, *i.e.*, its own resources are insufficient to check excessive poverty and the creation of a penurious rabble." He concludes: "This inner dialectic of civil society thus drives it—or at any rate drives a specific civil society—to push beyond its own limits and seek markets, and so its necessary means of subsistence, in other lands which are either deficient in the goods it has produced in superfluity, or else backward in their industry." This insight, extremely rare in Germans of Hegel's day, strengthened him in his belief that the state must be a power over "civil society," controlling the results which the operation of mere economic interest would produce. The argument became a standing one a generation later; and its implications and contradictions could only be defined if it was understood that the state itself was the product of civil society, of class relations.

Marx rightly judges Hegel's reactionary tendencies to be expressed in his idealism, not in his opinions on specific political issues. The whole *Philosophy of Right* is, Marx says, simply a "chapter of the Logic"; and his main criticism is directed at Hegel's mystical method of deducing the forms of society, the state itself, from his conception of the world as the expression of a metaphysical force, the Idea. Hegel sees two histories: one the secular, e.g., the rise and formation of states; the other the heavenly one, the true cause and justification of the state. He thus sanctifies the state as the highest and final expression of the Idea, irrespective of its actual origin and failings. Since practical history is the mere expression of the world-spirit, essential movement is in the spirit, and the only legitimate changes in the world are automatic and imperceptible. Hence, while Hegel celebrates liberating upheavals of the past, e.g., the French Revolution, he condemns political movements and programmes of the present and future, and gives men no guide as to how the state may be made more "rational." It was easy for Hegel to point out the flaws and vagueness in the writings of contemporary German liberals; but he gives no answer at all to the question: what is to be done?

This weakness, arising from his abstract and idealistic approach, is evident in his views on war. Hegel belonged to the Europe which was shaken and formed by

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the Napoleonic wars; his generation matured in the midst of wars. He saw and proclaimed that these wars had given a great spurt to social development and had cleared away a mass of antiquated feudal lumber; in Prussia they had produced a widespread national feeling for the first time. Thus Hegel insists on the value of war (especially in the *Philosophy of History*) as opposed to the Kantian abstraction of "perpetual peace." It is not sufficient to condemn Hegel as a warmonger because he considers war as a condition of the health of a nation; it certainly is irrelevant to laugh at him because he did not take into account the destructive and savage nature of future warfare. But war is for him an abstraction, deduced from the abstract principle of sovereignty of the state. He fails to investigate the material sources of war. In 1813 Fichte had distinguished between just wars, which the people should support, and unjust wars, carried out for their private ends by rulers. Hegel does not approach any such positive definition, and thus leaves us without practical guidance.

But there is another side to his idealism which Marx esteemed. In the *Theses on Feuerbach* Marx writes of the "active side" of idealism, which mechanical materialism lacks. Hegel interpreted all things, institutions, etc., as parts of the spirit, of the consciousness, which we have to assimilate, to make ours, just as animals assimilate food into their substance. The whole of life and history are understood as a unity, changing and developing dialectically; there are no bodies external to "the spirit." Marx adopted this view in a materialistic form, overcoming Feuerbach's distinction between nature and society, seeing that the essence of institutions as of commodities lay in their being man-made, the product of human labour and association. Marx learnt, too, from Hegel's thoughts on freedom. As opposed to contemporary German liberals, for whom freedom often meant freedom from law, Hegel insisted that true civil freedom is only realised in law, and that social institutions far from enchaining man's natural freedom are the very expression of man's power and freedom. Hegel might well be studied by those contemporaries of ours who lament over every social development, whether Beveridge Plan or Planning, as the "end of liberty." In the idealistic form of Hegel it is sometimes difficult, to be sure, to know whether a law develops or hampers man's freedom; it is only in the materialistic form of Marx's class-analysis that this theory of freedom becomes a practical guide.

In his earliest criticism of Hegel, Marx revolted against Hegel's view that men's position in the state is determined by their class-association; for Hegel concluded from this that Parliament should represent the various social "estates," voting separately, while Marx as a liberal supported universal franchise. But Marx soon recognised the shallowness of his own conception of "man" in the abstract, and recognised that the fundamental associations of men are of an economic class-nature. We can say that the conception of "class-consciousness" is a direct derivative from Hegel. (Of course, Hegel's definition of the classes of society is idealistic and antiquated, based on the mode of occupation, not on ownership—he distinguishes the classes of agriculture, of trade and production, and of the civil servants. Yet once a class-less society is established, we find a very similar distinction made, see Stalin's speech on the Draft Constitution, 1936, in *Leninism*, pp. 561-569).

It was a favourite opinion of Marx and Engels, following Hegel and Heine, that the only German history before 1848 to compare with the great social changes in France and England was the history of German thought and that this thought of Kant, Fichte, and Hegel was the parallel of the political liberation of the bourgeoisie abroad. "The Germans have *thought* in politics, what the other peoples have *done*," wrote Marx. Hegel is the deepest and most comprehensive theory of the bourgeois revolution. It has the limitations of its backward German environment; but it has the advantages of not being identified with any particular bourgeois interest or aim (as, for instance, Adam Smith's theories are). It thus expresses in its dialectics the pressure of social movement, the form of further advance, which was its most valued legacy to Marxism.

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